

# ELEMENTARY SHEPHERD GUIDE

Connecting to **Faith** using **Moses** as our example

**UNIT  
ONE:**

## THE FAITH CONNECTION

**UNIT VERSE:** "Now faith is being  
sure of what we hope for and certain  
of what we do not see." Hebrews 11:1

### PROGRAM VERSE:

"Come near to God and  
he will come near to you."  
James 4:8

**Unit Verse:** "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." Hebrews 11:1

Connection Word:

**faith**



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Faith** using **Moses** as our example



The birth of Moses:  
**Exodus 2:1-10**

**CUCUMBER CONNECTION:** Before kids arrive, photocopy pickles at 200%. Place them in a pickle jar. During the Cucumber Connection portion of the lesson, let a volunteer draw a pickle from the Pickle Pot and read the pickle aloud. Shepherds should help small groups process possible solutions to the lesson dilemmas using THINK-LINK-ACT.

## Shepherd Tips:

- Take time on this day to explore Veggie Lagoon.
- When you ask kids their opinions or thoughts, remember: there is no wrong answer.
- Not only does God want us to know that we should have faith in him, but he also has faith in each of us. Really let the kids know how special they are!

**THINK:**

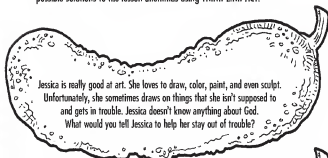
Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:**

Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

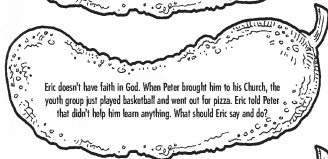
**ACT:**

Go and act on what God wants you to do!

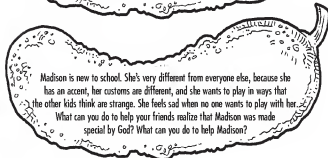


Jessica is really good at art. She loves to draw, color, paint, and even sculpt. Unfortunately, she sometimes draws on things that she isn't supposed to and gets in trouble. Jessica doesn't know anything about God.

What would you tell Jessica to help her stay out of trouble?



Eric doesn't have faith in God. When Peter brought him to his Church, the youth group just played basketball and went out for pizza. Eric told Peter that didn't help him learn anything. What should Eric say and do?



Madison is new to school. She's very different from everyone else, because she has an accent, her customs are different, and she wants to play in ways that the other kids think are strange. She feels sad when no one wants to play with her. What can you do to help your friends realize that Madison was made special by God? What can you do to help Madison?

**Unit Verse:** "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." Hebrews 11:1

Connection Word:

**challenge**



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Faith** using **Moses** as our example



Moses escapes into  
Midian: **Exodus 2:11-25**

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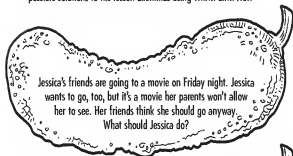
## Shepherd Tips:

- Have the kids do the activities on their own, unless you are asked to help out. It's easy to jump in and help, but it's important for the kids to connect with each other to accomplish tasks.
- Remember to listen to the kids' challenges in their lives. You can let them know that you heard them by repeating back portions of what they have told you. Eye contact is important, too!
- Having a hard day? For some of the kids in your group, you just may be the adult they depend on. Try to make the time with your group a bright spot. You may just perk up yourself!

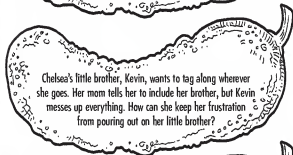
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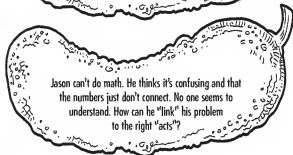
**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



Jessica's friends are going to a movie on Friday night. Jessica wants to go, too, but it's a movie her parents won't allow her to see. Her friends think she should go anyway. What should Jessica do?



Chelsea's little brother, Kevin, wants to tag along wherever she goes. Her mom tells her to include her brother, but Kevin messes up everything. How can she keep her frustration from pouring out on her little brother?



Jason can't do math. He thinks it's confusing and that the numbers just don't connect. No one seems to understand. How can he "link" his problem to the right "acts"?

**Unit Verse:** "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." Hebrews 11:1

Connection Word:

**control**



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Faith** using **Moses** as our example



God talks to Moses  
from a burning bush:  
**Exodus 3:1-4:17**

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## Shepherd Tips:

- During prayer time today, there will be time to discuss prayers that have been answered. Focus on identifying those answered prayers!
- Be sure to keep kids away from fan blades near the burning bush.
- If the kids in your group tend to pair off with the same partners each week, you may want to consider assigning new partners for each lesson, or even each unit.

**THINK:**

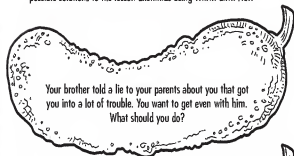
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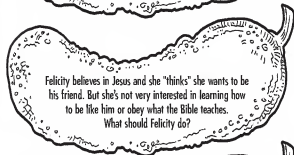
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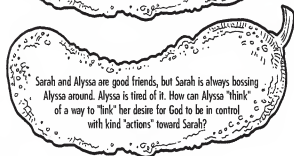
Go and act on what God wants you to do!



Your brother told a lie to your parents about you that got you into a lot of trouble. You want to get even with him. What should you do?



Felicity believes in Jesus and she "thinks" she wants to be his friend. But she's not very interested in learning how to be like him or obey what the Bible teaches. What should Felicity do?



Sarah and Alyssa are good friends, but Sarah is always bossing Alyssa around. Alyssa is tired of it. How can Alyssa "think" of a way to "link" her desire for God to be in control with kind "actions" toward Sarah?

**Unit Verse:** "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." Hebrews 11:1

Connection Word:

plague



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Faith** using **Moses** as our example



Moses returns to Egypt:  
**Exodus 5:1–11:10**

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## Shepherd Tips:

- Pray for your students each week.
- It is helpful to arrive before the children do. Arriving early will give you a few moments to orient yourself to the day's activities.
- If you don't love to sing, encourage one of the children in your group to be the song leader whenever the opportunity presents itself.

**THINK:**

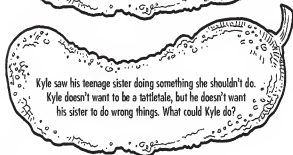
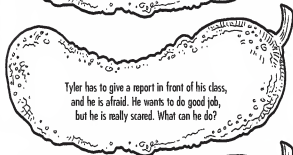
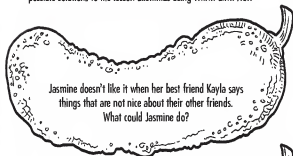
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**LINK:**

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**ACT:**

Go and act on what God wants you to do!



**Unit Verse:** "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." Hebrews 11:1

Connection Word:

**persevere**



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Faith** using **Moses** as our example



Moses helps the Hebrews prepare: **Exodus 12:1-13:16**

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## Shepherd Tips:

- Are you missing one of the kids in your group due to poor attendance? Ask your Site Leader if you can contact them to let them know they are missed.
- Pray for the other volunteers in your program.
- Embrace diversity in your group. Kids can learn so much from each other!

**THINK:**

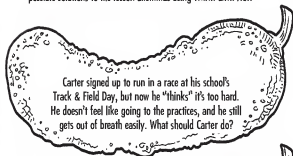
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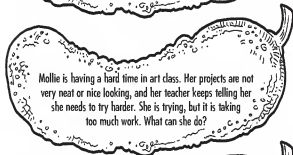
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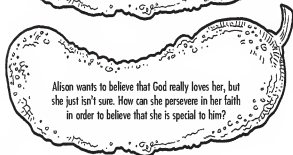
Go and act on what God wants you to do!



Carter signed up to run in a race at his school's Track & Field Day, but now he "thinks" it's too hard. He doesn't feel like going to the practices, and he still gets out of breath easily. What should Carter do?



Mollie is having a hard time in art class. Her projects are not very neat or nice looking, and her teacher keeps telling her she needs to try harder. She is trying, but it is taking too much work. What can she do?



Allison wants to believe that God really loves her, but she just isn't sure. How can she persevere in her faith in order to believe that she is special to him?

**Unit Verse:** "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." Hebrews 11:1

Connection Word:

chariot



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Faith** using **Moses** as our example



Moses leads God's people through the Red Sea:  
**Exodus 13:17-14:31**

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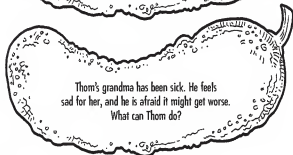
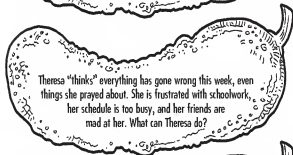
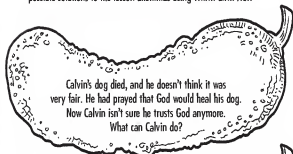
## Shepherd Tips:

- Be sure to treat each child fairly.
- Pray for the families of the kids in your group.
- You may want to bring your Bible with you each week. The kids will model what you do!

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



**Unit Verse:** "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." Hebrews 11:1

Connection Word:

**commandment**



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Faith** using **Moses** as our example



Moses receives the  
Ten Commandments:  
**Exodus 19:1-20:21**

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## Shepherd Tips:

- When leading the kids in prayer, be sure to pray for current events in the world as well.
- Don't ever stop telling the kids how much God loves them and wants to have a relationship with them.
- You may not get along with every child, but every child has unique and special qualities that God gave him or her. Try to find the good in every kid!

**THINK:**

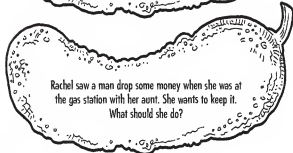
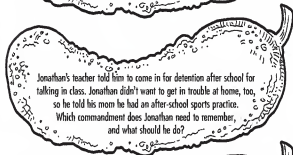
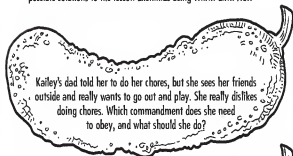
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Go and act on what God wants you to do!





**Unit Verse:** "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." Hebrews 11:1

Connection Word:

witness



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Faith** using **Moses** as our example



Moses shares his faith:  
**Deuteronomy 11:1-21:**  
**Hebrews 11:24-28**

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## Shepherd Tips:

- Get to know the kids' parents as they drop off or pick up their children each week.
- When a child does something kind, be sure to give him or her a lot of praise.
- Not all children have good social skills. Respect where they are in that learning phase, but be sure to correct rude or harmful behavior.

**THINK:**

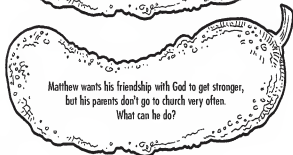
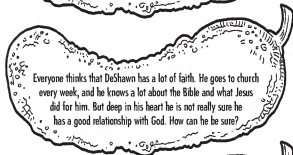
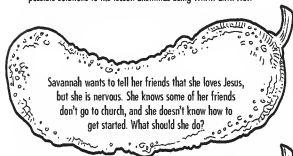
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**ACT:**

Go and act on what God wants you to do!



# ELEMENTARY SHEPHERD GUIDE

Connecting to **Communication** through **Paul's Ministry**

**UNIT  
TWO:**

## THE COMMUNICATION CONNECTION

**UNIT VERSE:** "Ask and it will be given  
to you; seek and you will find; knock and  
the door will be opened to you."  
Matthew 7:7

### PROGRAM VERSE:

"Come near to God and  
he will come near to you."  
James 4:8

**Unit Verse:** "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." Matthew 7:7

Connection Word:

communication



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Communication** through  
**Paul's Ministry**



Jesus speaks to Saul:  
**Acts 9: 1-19**

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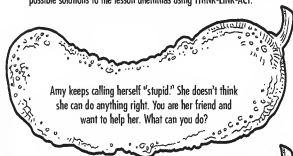
## Shepherd Tips:

- There are many fun and silly aspects of Snoodleburg. Embrace the silliness, and the children will follow your lead!
- While the children are making their pancake self-portraits, be sure to ask lots of questions to get to know your group better. Support whatever silly creations they make.
- If a child is not comfortable praying aloud, don't force him or her to! You will earn the kids' respect by first respecting them!

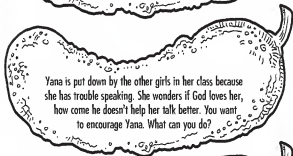
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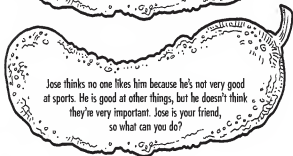
**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



Amy keeps calling herself "stupid." She doesn't think she can do anything right. You are her friend and want to help her. What can you do?



Yana is put down by the other girls in her class because she has trouble speaking. She wonders if God loves her, how come he doesn't help her talk better. You want to encourage Yana. What can you do?



Jose thinks no one likes him because he's not very good at sports. He is good at other things, but he doesn't think they're very important. Jose is your friend, so what can you do?

**Unit Verse:** "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." Matthew 7:7

Connection Word:

prayer



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Communication** through  
**Paul's Ministry**



Paul prays for the church  
in Colossae: **Colossians 1:1-14**

## Shepherd Tips:

- During the Prayer Connection, the kids' arms will be linked together to demonstrate that, like a magnet, when we draw near to God, he draws near to us.
- Throughout the lesson, encourage kids to memorize the Program Verse, James 4:8: "Come near to God and he will come near to you."
- During the God Connection, if the kids in your group are old enough, let them record the group's responses and gently guide the kids through the activity. If the kids are younger, record the information and take a stronger lead in guiding them through the activity.

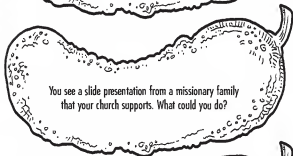
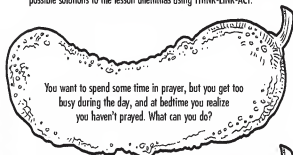
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**Unit Verse:** "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." Matthew 7:7

Connection Word:

listen



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Communication** through  
**Paul's Ministry**



Paul listens to God:  
**Acts 16:6-10**

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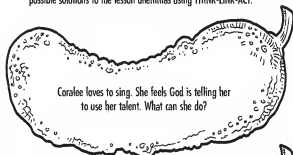
## Shepherd Tips:

- As the concept of listening is explored today, remind the children that God speaks to us in more than one way.
- When discussing God's possible answers to the kids' prayers, remind the kids that he may respond with a yes, no, wait, or with an entirely different plan altogether.
- Make sure that all members of your group have the chance to respond to the pickles presented in the Cucumber Connection.

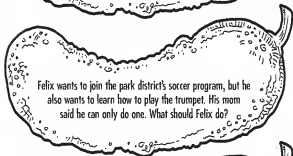
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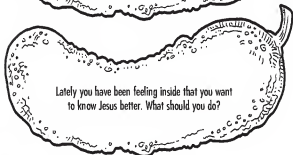
**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



Coralie loves to sing. She feels God is telling her to use her talent. What can she do?



Felix wants to join the park district's soccer program, but he also wants to learn how to play the trumpet. His mom said he can only do one. What should Felix do?



Lately you have been feeling inside that you want to know Jesus better. What should you do?

**Unit Verse:** "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." Matthew 7:7

Connection Word:

worship



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Communication** through  
**Paul's Ministry**



Paul and Silas worship God  
from prison: **Acts 16:16-36**

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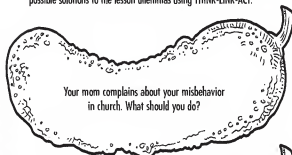
## Shepherd Tips:

- During the beginning activity, when the children are "connecting" with each other, be a positive referee, making sure everyone is being gentle and polite!
- After the reenactment of the jail/earthquake story, there will be time for a brief, small group discussion. Encourage your group to name ways that they can worship God, even when they don't feel like it.
- Take the time to get to know the kids' interests and be sure to ask about them throughout the program.

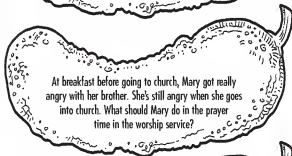
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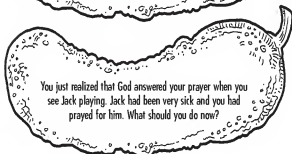
**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



Your mom complains about your misbehavior in church. What should you do?



At breakfast before going to church, Mary got really angry with her brother. She's still angry when she goes into church. What should Mary do in the prayer time in the worship service?



You just realized that God answered your prayer when you see Jack playing. Jack had been very sick and you had prayed for him. What should you do now?

**Unit Verse:** "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." Matthew 7:7

Connection Word:

armor



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Communication** through  
**Paul's Ministry**



Paul explains about the armor  
of God: **Ephesians 6:10-20**

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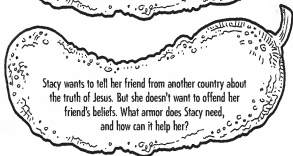
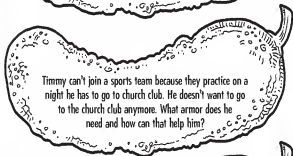
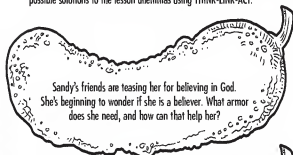
## Shepherd Tips:

- During the Prayer Connection, build enthusiasm for the different types of prayers.
- Make sure different kids are chosen each time as volunteers.
- Respect each child in your group and his or her participation level from week to week.

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



**Unit Verse:** "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." Matthew 7:7

Connection Word:

**Holy Spirit**



## Shepherd Tips:

- Some kids may get anxious during the opening activity. Remind them that it's just for fun.
- Encourage kids to respect items used from week to week.
- Finding a clique in your group? Try to separate these kids for activity times.

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



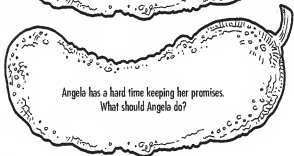
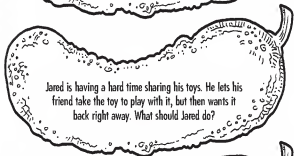
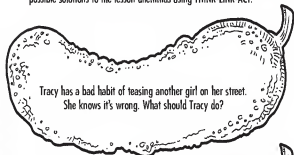
## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Communication** through  
**Paul's Ministry**



Paul explains how to live by the Spirit: **Galatians 5:16-26**

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**Unit Verse:** "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." Matthew 7:7

Connection Word:

help



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Communication** through  
**Paul's Ministry**



Paul sails for Rome:  
**Acts 27**

**CUCUMBER CONNECTION:** Before kids arrive, photocopy pickles at 200%. Place them in a pickle jar. During the Cucumber Connection portion of the lesson, let a volunteer draw a pickle from the Pickle Pot and read the pickle aloud. Shepherds should help small groups process possible solutions to the lesson dilemmas using THINK-LINK-ACT.

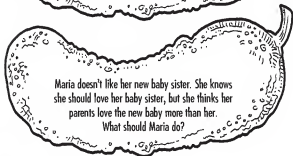
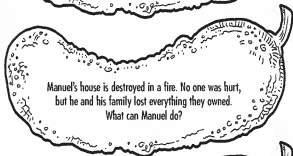
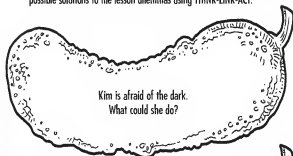
## Shepherd Tips:

- As you walk to your site each week from the Countertop Connection, play Follow the Leader. Let good listeners be the leader each week.
- When misting the kids in the 'boat' with water bottles, remember not to get carried away!
- Circulate throughout your group with your Bible verse fan.

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



**Unit Verse:** "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." Matthew 7:7

Connection Word:

preach



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Communication** through  
**Paul's Ministry**



Paul tells others about God:  
**Acts 9:20-31**

**CUCUMBER CONNECTION:** Before kids arrive, photocopy pickles at 200%. Place them in a pickle jar. During the Cucumber Connection portion of the lesson, let a volunteer draw a pickle from the Pickle Pot and read the pickle aloud. Shepherds should help small groups process possible solutions to the lesson dilemmas using THINK-LINK-ACT.

## Shepherd Tips:

- When the children do the motions for the Bible story, join in and participate!
- Be prepared to share something you know about God with your group today. It may be a fact or something that you have experienced.
- Encourage the kids to take quiet time as they write in their prayer journals.

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



Jean's friend Manuel doesn't have a connection to Jesus. What could Jean do?

Kathy's grandmother recently died. Kathy has a lot of questions about heaven. What should Kathy do?

Bonnie is very shy. She wants to tell others about Jesus, but she is afraid. What should Bonnie do?

# ELEMENTARY SHEPHERD GUIDE

Connecting to Love through Jesus

**UNIT  
THREE:**

## THE LOVE CONNECTION

**UNIT VERSE:** "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it:

'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

**Matthew 22:37-39**

### PROGRAM VERSE:

"Come near to God and  
he will come near to you."  
James 4:8

**Unit Verse:** "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" Matthew 22:37-39

Connection Word:

love



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Love** through **Jesus**



Jesus and Nicodemus:  
**John 3:1-21**

**CUCUMBER CONNECTION:** Before kids arrive, photocopy pickles at 200%. Place them in a pickle jar. During the Cucumber Connection portion of the lesson, let a volunteer draw a pickle from the Pickle Pot and read the pickle aloud. Shepherds should help small groups process possible solutions to the lesson dilemmas using THINK-LINK-ACT.

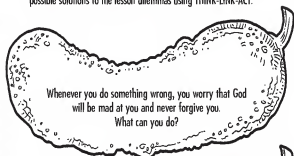
## Shepherd Tips:

- Flibber-o-loo is an exciting site! Let the kids explore throughout the lesson as time permits.
- Encourage kids to talk to God daily.
- Kids may be shy—don't force them to participate. Encourage them as they seem ready.

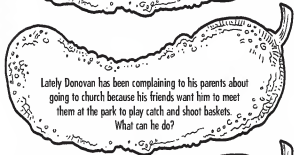
**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

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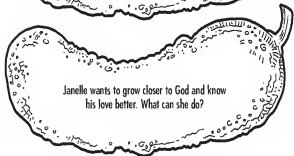
**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



Whenever you do something wrong, you worry that God will be mad at you and never forgive you.  
What can you do?



Lately Donovan has been complaining to his parents about going to church because his friends want him to meet them at the park to play catch and shoot baskets.  
What can he do?



Janelle wants to grow closer to God and know his love better. What can she do?

**Unit Verse:** "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" Matthew 22:37-39

Connection Word:

**counselor**



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Love** through **Jesus**



**Jesus and the Holy Spirit:**  
**John 16:5-15**

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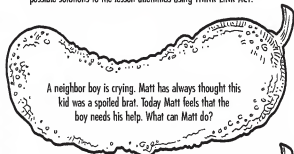
## Shepherd Tips:

- The concept of the Holy Spirit is introduced in this lesson, so be prepared for questions.
- Help all kids participate in activities by encouraging them with verbal praise.
- No matter what your day is like, always share smiles with your group. You'll find that smiles are contagious!

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

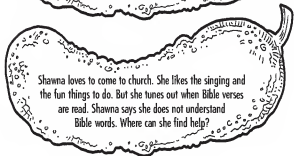
**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



A neighbor boy is crying. Matt has always thought this kid was a spoiled brat. Today Matt feels that the boy needs his help. What can Matt do?



Jackie's parents told her to clean her room. She had other things in mind, like talking on the phone with friends. But she feels God is telling her to obey her parents. What should Jackie do?



Shawna loves to come to church. She likes the singing and the fun things to do. But she tunes out when Bible verses are read. Shawna says she does not understand Bible words. Where can she find help?

**Unit Verse:** "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:37-39

Connection Word:

teach



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to Love through Jesus



Jesus teaches the Beatitudes: **Matthew 5:1-12**

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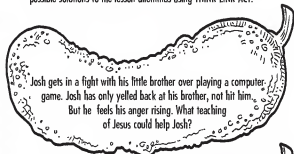
## Shepherd Tips:

- If a child is consistently withdrawn, take the time to develop a relationship with him or her. This child may need an adult role model to look up to.
- Is a child having a bad day? Give him or her the benefit of the doubt.
- Do you have a kid in your group who tends to tell a lot of lies? Tell him or her that it takes courage to tell the truth, and God is a very forgiving God.

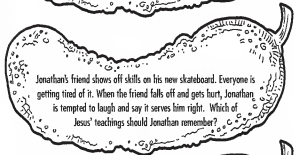
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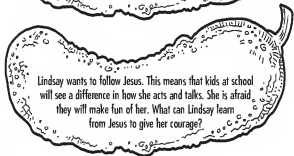
**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



Josh gets in a fight with his little brother over playing a computer game. Josh has only yelled back at his brother, not hit him. But he feels his anger rising. What teaching of Jesus could help Josh?



Jonathan's friend shows off skills on his new skateboard. Everyone is getting tired of it. When the friend falls off and gets hurt, Jonathan is tempted to laugh and say it serves him right. Which of Jesus' teachings should Jonathan remember?



Lindsay wants to follow Jesus. This means that kids at school will see a difference in how she acts and talks. She is afraid they will make fun of her. What can Lindsay learn from Jesus to give her courage?

**Unit Verse:** "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" Matthew 22:37-39

Connection Word:

source



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to Love through Jesus



Peter walks on water:  
**Matthew 14:22-36**

## LESSON 4:

I have Jesus  
as my daily source  
of love.



### Shepherd Tips:

- The focus of today's lesson is that if we keep our eyes on Jesus, all things are possible—even walking on water!
- Dealing with a giggly group? Ask the gigglers to share their source of laughter with you—after the lesson.
- Supervise children at all times.

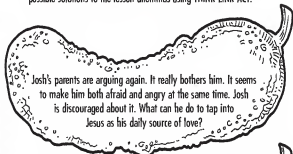
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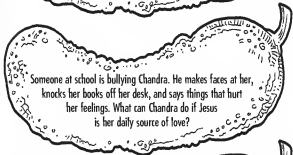
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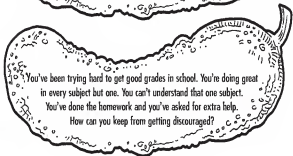
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Josh's parents are arguing again. It really bothers him. It seems to make him both afraid and angry at the same time. Josh is discouraged about it. What can he do to tap into Jesus as his daily source of love?



Someone at school is bullying Chandra. He makes faces at her, knocks her books off her desk, and says things that hurt her feelings. What can Chandra do if Jesus is her daily source of love?



You've been trying hard to get good grades in school. You're doing great in every subject but one. You can't understand that one subject. You've done the homework and you've asked for extra help. How can you keep from getting discouraged?

**Unit Verse:** "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it. "Love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:37-39

Connection Word:

forgive



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to Love through Jesus



Jesus and the parable of the lost son: **Luke 15:11-32**

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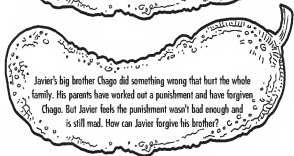
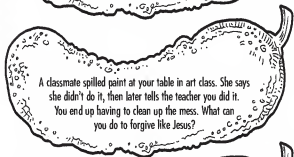
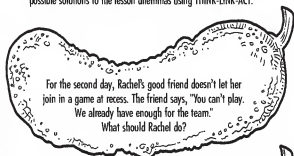
## Shepherd Tips:

- Forgiveness is such an important act. Be ready to share your own acts of forgiveness, and how they made you feel, with your group.
- You are a necessary part of Children's Ministry! Thank you for your help!
- Be accessible for children to approach you with concerns.

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!





**Unit Verse:** "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" Matthew 22:37-39

Connection Word:

neighbor



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to Love through Jesus



Jesus and the parable of the good Samaritan:  
**Luke 10:25-37**

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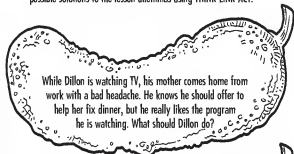
## Shepherd Tips:

- Remember the Program Verse: "Come near to God and he will come near to you." James 4:8.
- As you discuss neighbors this week, encourage kids to talk about their own neighbors and nice things they can do for them.
- Respect everything that the children tell you. You have a trusted relationship with them that they value.

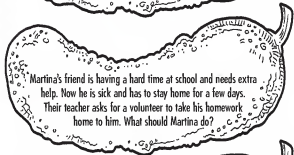
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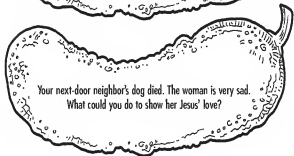
**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



While Dillon is watching TV, his mother comes home from work with a bad headache. He knows he should offer to help her fix dinner, but he really likes the program he is watching. What should Dillon do?



Martina's friend is having a hard time at school and needs extra help. Now he is sick and has to stay home for a few days. Their teacher asks for a volunteer to take his homework home to him. What should Martina do?



Your next-door neighbor's dog died. The woman is very sad. What could you do to show her Jesus' love?

**Unit Verse:** "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:37-39

Connection Word:

obey



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to Love through Jesus



Jesus tells us how to show love: **John 14:23-31a**

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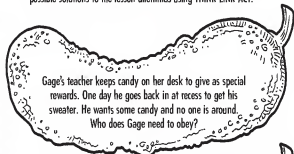
## Shepherd Tips:

- Join in as the kids link arms during their prayer. As the VeggieConnections Shepherd, your involvement validates what they are doing.
- Remind the children that it is important to obey their parents.
- Some children may take pride in the fact that they are disobedient. Gently remind them that we obey to honor God.

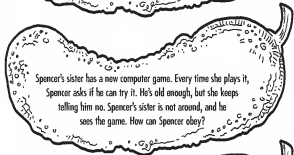
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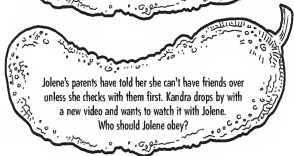
**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



Gage's teacher keeps candy on her desk to give as special rewards. One day he goes back in at recess to get his sweater. He wants some candy and no one is around. Who does Gage need to obey?



Spencer's sister has a new computer game. Every time she plays it, Spencer asks if he can try it. He's old enough, but she keeps telling him no. Spencer's sister is not around, and he sees the game. How can Spencer obey?



Jolene's parents have told her she can't have friends over unless she checks with them first. Kandira drops by with a new video and wants to watch it with Jolene. Who should Jolene obey?

**Unit Verse:** "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:37-39

Connection Word:

**servant**



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to Love through Jesus



Jesus and his people:  
**Matthew 20:20-34**

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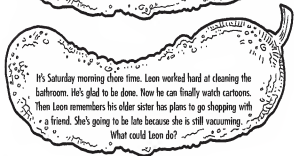
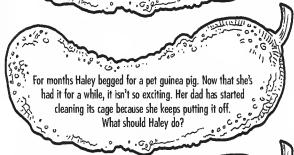
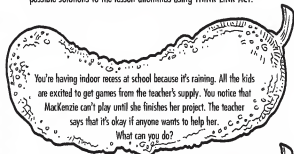
## Shepherd Tips:

- Ask kids throughout the lesson to share the Unit Memory Verse with you.
- As the Site Leader asks for volunteers to help with lessons, make sure you participate. Your kids will be so proud to see their Shepherd participating!
- Include the children of *Compassion International* in your prayers today.

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



# ELEMENTARY SHEPHERD GUIDE

Connecting to **Trust** with life examples from **Joseph**

**UNIT  
FOUR:**

## THE TRUST CONNECTION

**UNIT VERSE:** "May the God of hope  
fill you with all joy and peace as you trust  
in him so that you may overflow with hope  
by the power of the Holy Spirit."

**Romans 15:13**

### PROGRAM VERSE:

"Come near to God and  
he will come near to you."  
James 4:8

**Unit Verse:** "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13

Connection Word:

**trust**



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Trust** with life examples from **Joseph**



The story of Joseph:  
**Genesis 37:1–50:26**

**CUCUMBER CONNECTION:** Before kids arrive, photocopy pickles at 200%. Place them in a pickle jar. During the Cucumber Connection portion of the lesson, let a volunteer draw a pickle from the Pickle Pot and read the pickle aloud. Shepherds should help small groups process possible solutions to the lesson dilemmas using **THINK-LINK-ACT**.

## Shepherd Tips:

- In Dodgeball City, the kids will use the Dodgeball Dictionary rhyme as they 'clip clip' their hands on the knees to imitate horse hooves.

**Look it up, hook it up, what's it all about?**

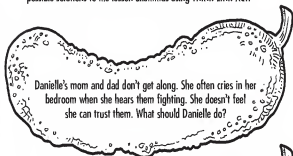
**Look it up, hook it up, let's find out!**

- If children don't want to share their prayers aloud, that's okay! They can simply write it on their paper. Encourage all kids to write something.
- Today's Bible story involves many helpers. Help the Site Leader by transitioning the various volunteers in and out of their roles.

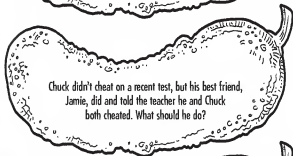
**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

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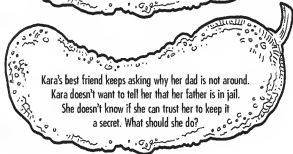
**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



Danielle's mom and dad don't get along. She often cries in her bedroom when she hears them fighting. She doesn't feel she can trust them. What should Danielle do?



Chuck didn't cheat on a recent test, but his best friend, Jamie, did and told the teacher he and Chuck both cheated. What should he do?



Kara's best friend keeps asking why her dad is not around. Kara doesn't want to tell her that her father is in jail. She doesn't know if she can trust her to keep it a secret. What should she do?

**Unit Verse:** "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13

Connection Word:

slavery



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Trust** with life examples from **Joseph**



Joseph is sold into slavery:  
**Genesis 37:3-36**

**CUCUMBER CONNECTION:** Before kids arrive, photocopy pickles at 200%. Place them in a pickle jar. During the Cucumber Connection portion of the lesson, let a volunteer draw a pickle from the Pickle Pot and read the pickle aloud. Shepherds should help small groups process possible solutions to the lesson dilemmas using **THINK-LINK-ACT**.

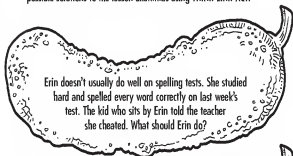
## Shepherd Tips:

- Just for fun, you may want to speak like a cowpoke today. Just add a little drasaww! to your words!
- When the kids are doing their "chore," encourage them to work hard and not stop.
- Dealing with a child who always needs to go to the restroom? Allow him or her to go, and then encourage the child to go before the session begins for the day. If a chronic problem persists, speak to your Director, who may want to alert the child's parents.

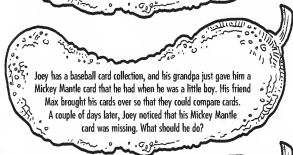
**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

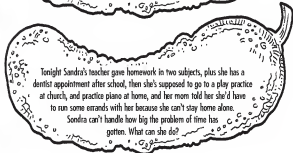
**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



Erin doesn't usually do well on spelling tests. She studied hard and spelled every word correctly on last week's test. The kid who sits by Erin told the teacher she cheated. What should Erin do?



Joey has a baseball card collection, and his grandpa just gave him a Mickey Mantle card that he had when he was a little boy. His friend Max brought his cards over so that they could compare cards. A couple of days later, Joey noticed that his Mickey Mantle card was missing. What should he do?



Tonight Sandra's teacher gave homework in two subjects, plus she has a dentist appointment after school, then she's supposed to go to a play practice at church, and practice piano at home, and her mom told her she'd have to run some errands with her because she can't stay home alone. Sandra can't handle how big the problem of time has gotten. What can she do?

**Unit Verse:** "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13

Connection Word:

**temptation**



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Trust** with life examples from **Joseph**



Joseph is tempted to do wrong: **Genesis 39:1-20a**

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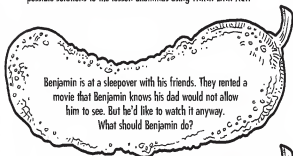
## Shepherd Tips:

- Temptation is the topic today! In the beginning of the lesson, reinforce that the kids are not supposed to eat their treats (the Site Leader will let them eat later!)
- Dodgeballs will be used during the Bible story presentation today. Be on your game and help keep control in Dodgeball City!
- If one of the kids in your group seems unusually quiet, take some time to ask how he or she is doing. Really listen well; your relationship with the kids is important!

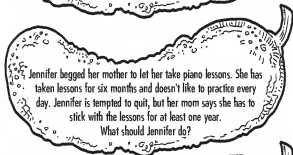
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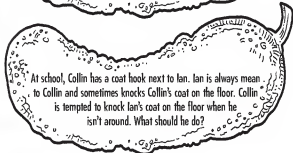
**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



Benjamin is at a sleepover with his friends. They rented a movie that Benjamin knows his dad would not allow him to see. But he'd like to watch it anyway.  
What should Benjamin do?



Jennifer begged her mother to let her take piano lessons. She has taken lessons for six months and doesn't like to practice every day. Jennifer is tempted to quit, but her mom says she has to stick with the lessons for at least one year.  
What should Jennifer do?



At school, Collin has a coat hook next to Ian. Ian is always mean to Collin and sometimes knocks Collin's coat on the floor. Collin is tempted to knock Ian's coat on the floor when he isn't around. What should he do?

**Unit Verse:** "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13

Connection Word:

**attitude**



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Trust** with life examples from **Joseph**



Joseph in prison:  
**Genesis 39:20b-23**

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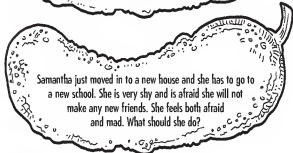
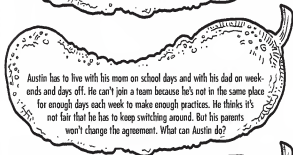
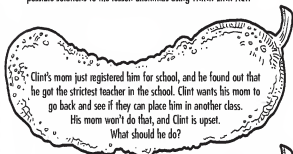
## Shepherd Tips:

- You may occasionally be asked by the Site Leader to volunteer for something special. Jump right in! Your kids will love to watch you do something neat!
- If you choose to do a "squeeze prayer" today, remind kids to squeeze each other's hands very gently.
- High-five any volunteers from your group. A lot of praise goes a long way in developing a relationship with the kids!

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!





**Unit Verse:** "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13

Connection Word:

**courage**



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Trust** with life examples from **Joseph**



Joseph and the cupbearer and baker: **Genesis 40:1-23**

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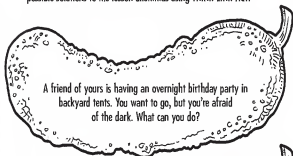
## Shepherd Tips:

- This week's lesson focuses on courage. Think of some meaningful suggestions of times when the kids might need courage.
- Try to incorporate the courage that the children of *Compassion International* need in their daily lives.
- Do you have a kid who always wants to answer questions first? Praise the child for his or her enthusiasm and then explain that you would like to hear from everyone in the group!

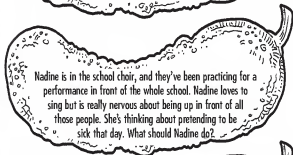
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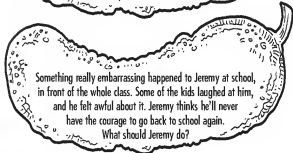
**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



A friend of yours is having an overnight birthday party in backyard tents. You want to go, but you're afraid of the dark. What can you do?



Nadine is in the school choir, and they've been practicing for a performance in front of the whole school. Nadine loves to sing but is really nervous about being up in front of all those people. She's thinking about pretending to be sick that day. What should Nadine do?



Something really embarrassing happened to Jeremy at school, in front of the whole class. Some of the kids laughed at him, and he felt awful about it. Jeremy thinks he'll never have the courage to go back to school again. What should Jeremy do?

**Unit Verse:** "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13

Connection Word:

**interpret**



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Trust** with life examples from **Joseph**



Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams: **Genesis 41:1-40**

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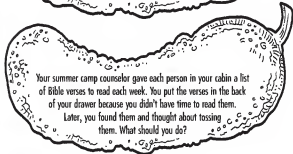
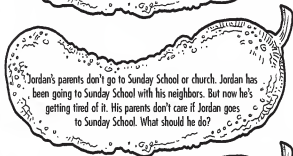
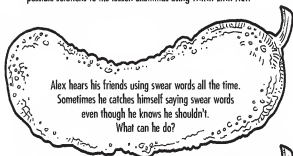
## Shepherd Tips:

- During the Interpret Game in the VeggieConnection, some simple words to whisper to the kids are: *cactus, snake, boot, or house*.
- Focus on building relationships within your group today.
- Praise the kids when they share or show that they truly care for each other. Be a Share & Care Detective!

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



**Unit Verse:** "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13

Connection Word:

plan



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Trust** with life examples from **Joseph**



Joseph is in charge of Egypt: **Genesis 41:41–45:15**

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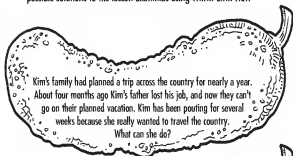
## Shepherd Tips:

- This is another fun lesson with lots of balls and balloons! Be sure to be a great helper today in keeping control in Dodgeball City.
- Today, the children may share any answers to prayers they have asked. Remember, all responses are valuable!
- Remind the kids to be sure to share their *Veggie-Connections* newspaper with their families each week.

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

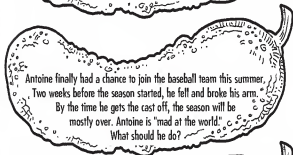
**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



Kim's family had planned a trip across the country for nearly a year.

About four months ago Kim's father lost his job, and now they can't go on their planned vacation. Kim has been pouting for several weeks because she really wanted to travel the country.

What can she do?

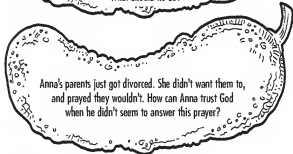


Antoine finally had a chance to join the baseball team this summer.

Two weeks before the season started, he fell and broke his arm.

By the time he gets the cast off, the season will be mostly over. Antoine is "mad at the world."

What should he do?



Anna's parents just got divorced. She didn't want them to, and prayed they wouldn't. How can Anna trust God when he didn't seem to answer this prayer?

**Unit Verse:** "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13

Connection Word:

reassure



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Trust** with life examples from **Joseph**



Joseph reassures his brothers: **Genesis 50:15-21**

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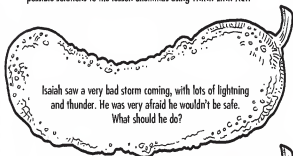
## Shepherd Tips:

- Join your group when they play Dodgeball City's version of Simon Says!
- Be very reassuring to your group during the Prayer Connection time. Remind them that God always answers our prayers, just not always in a way that we understand or see clearly.
- During Cucumber Connection discussions, work hard to let every child have a chance to share his or her thoughts. You may need to ask a child a question such as, "What do you think, John?" to get a child to join in the discussion.

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

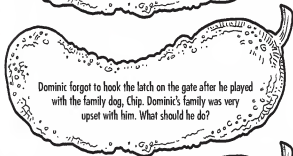
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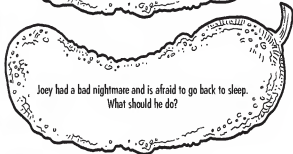


Isaiah saw a very bad storm coming, with lots of lightning and thunder. He was very afraid he wouldn't be safe.

What should he do?



Dominic forgot to hook the latch on the gate after he played with the family dog, Chip. Dominic's family was very upset with him. What should he do?



Joey had a bad nightmare and is afraid to go back to sleep. What should he do?

# ELEMENTARY SHEPHERD GUIDE

Connecting to **Time** through the writings of the disciple **John**

**UNIT  
FIVE:**

## THE **TIME** CONNECTION

**UNIT VERSE:** "Teach us to number  
our days aright, that we may gain a  
heart of wisdom." Psalm 90:12



### **PROGRAM VERSE:**

"Come near to God and  
he will come near to you."  
James 4:8

**Unit Verse:** "Teach us to number our days  
aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."  
Psalm 90:12

Connection Word:

eternal



## Shepherd Tips:

- Take time to explore the Chocolate Factory with your group before the lesson starts.
- This is an exciting site with lots of treats. Be prepared for high-energy kids in your group!
- Offer assistance to kids only when they get frustrated or ask for help.

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.  
**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.  
**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



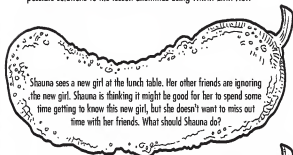
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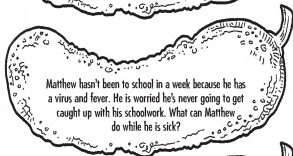


John writes about how  
God became human:  
**John 1:1-18; 1 John 5:13-18**

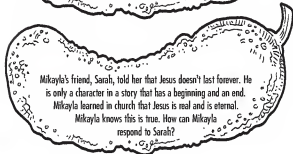
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Shauna sees a new girl at the lunch table. Her other friends are ignoring the new girl. Shauna is thinking it might be good for her to spend some time getting to know this new girl, but she doesn't want to miss out time with her friends. What should Shauna do?



Matthew hasn't been to school in a week because he has a virus and fever. He is worried he's never going to get caught up with his schoolwork. What can Matthew do while he is sick?



Mikayla's friend, Sarah, told her that Jesus doesn't last forever. He is only a character in a story that has a beginning and an end. Mikayla learned in church that Jesus is real and is eternal. Mikayla knows this is true. How can Mikayla respond to Sarah?

**Unit Verse:** "Teach us to number our days  
aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."  
Psalm 90:12

Connection Word:

**Holy Spirit**



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Time** through the writings  
of the disciple **John**



John writes about the  
Holy Spirit: **John 14:15-29**

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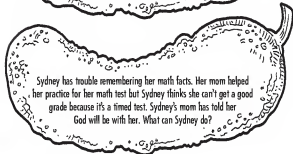
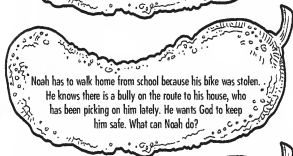
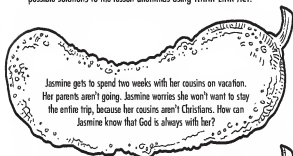
## Shepherd Tips:

- While the kids work on their Assembly Line activity, stay near them but don't offer any help initially.
- When the kids' supplies run out in the Assembly Line activity, immediately help the kids—but only after they ask for help.
- You may be asked to share a personal experience of when the Holy Spirit has encouraged you. Be prepared to share if you feel comfortable.

**THINK:** Stop and think about  
what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what  
you've learned to your choices.

**ACT:** Go and act on what God  
wants you to do!



**Unit Verse:** "Teach us to number our days  
aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."  
Psalm 90:12

Connection Word:

light



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Time** through the writings  
of the disciple **John**



John writes about walking in  
the light: **1 John 1:5-2:6**

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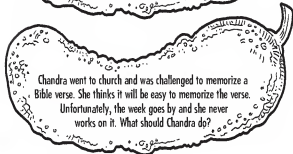
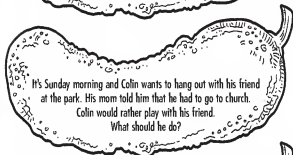
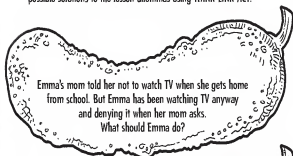
## Shepherd Tips:

- There is a chance that the Chocolate Factory may be very dark today. Make sure you sit with your group during the God Connection (Bible story presentation).
- Frequent praise of the kids in your group will promote cooperation and community!
- If you need to talk to a child about negative behavior, do it privately, and conclude with a prayer.

**THINK:** Stop and think about  
what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what  
you've learned to your choices.

**ACT:** Go and act on what God  
wants you to do!





**Unit Verse:** "Teach us to number our days  
aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."  
Psalm 90:12

Connection Word:

priority



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Time** through the writings  
of the disciple **John**



John writes about Jesus'  
teachings: **John 15:1-17**

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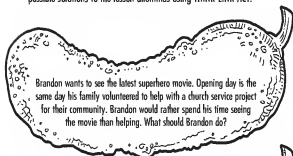
## Shepherd Tips:

- Remember to greet new kids warmly and include them immediately in your group.
- When you can, reward the kids for little things such as walking quietly in the hallway and cleaning up well. The reward can be as simple as a thumbs-up!
- Make sure different kids get a chance to go to the Chocomatic Machine each week.

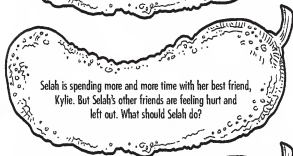
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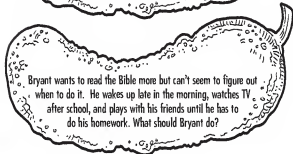
**ACT:** Go and act on what God  
wants you to do!



Brandon wants to see the latest superhero movie. Opening day is the same day his family volunteered to help with a church service project for their community. Brandon would rather spend his time seeing the movie than helping. What should Brandon do?



Selah is spending more and more time with her best friend, Kylie. But Selah's other friends are feeling hurt and left out. What should Selah do?



Bryant wants to read the Bible more but can't seem to figure out when to do it. He wakes up late in the morning, watches TV after school, and plays with his friends until he has to do his homework. What should Bryant do?

**Unit Verse:** "Teach us to number our days  
aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."  
Psalm 90:12

Connection Word:

patience



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Time** through the writings  
of the disciple **John**



John writes about Lazarus:  
**John 11:1-44**

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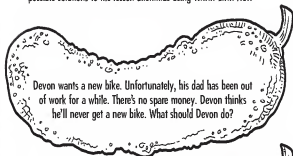
## Shepherd Tips:

- The focus of today's lesson is patience. The kids will be shown how hard it can be to be patient but also how rewarding it can be when we learn patience.
- The kids will hear the story of Lazarus being raised from the dead. Focus on Mary and Martha's patience and trust in God's timing during your discussion.
- If your group is small, don't hesitate to team up with another group occasionally.

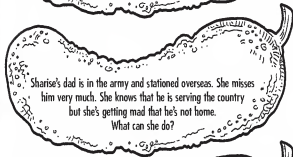
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**LINK:** Link God's Word and what  
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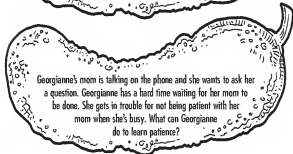
**ACT:** Go and act on what God  
wants you to do!



Devon wants a new bike. Unfortunately, his dad has been out of work for a while. There's no spare money. Devon thinks he'll never get a new bike. What should Devon do?



Sharise's dad is in the army and stationed overseas. She misses him very much. She knows that he is serving the country but she's getting mad that he's not home. What can she do?



Georgianne's mom is talking on the phone and she wants to ask her a question. Georgianne has a hard time waiting for her mom to be done. She gets in trouble for not being patient with her mom when she's busy. What can Georgianne do to learn patience?

**Unit Verse:** "Teach us to number our days  
aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."  
Psalm 90:12

Connection Word:

effort



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Time** through the writings  
of the disciple **John**



John writes about what Jesus  
does in Cana and Jerusalem.  
**John 2:1-11; John 4:46-5:17**

**CUCUMBER CONNECTION:** Before kids arrive, photocopy pickles at 200%. Place them in a pickle jar. During the Cucumber Connection portion of the lesson, let a volunteer draw a pickle from the Pickle Pot and read the pickle aloud. Shepherds should help small groups process possible solutions to the lesson dilemmas using **THINK-LINK-ACT**.

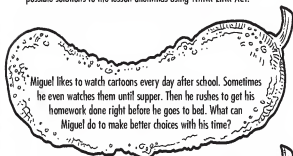
## Shepherd Tips:

- Encourage your group to jump right in and get to work on their puzzles.
- When children get frustrated, just tell them to do their very best.
- A simple way to quiet a child speaking out of turn is to stand or sit right next to him or her during the lesson. Your presence should quiet the child right away.

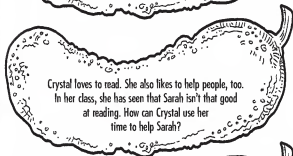
**THINK:** Stop and think about  
what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what  
you've learned to your choices.

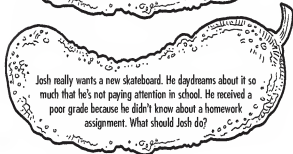
**ACT:** Go and act on what God  
wants you to do!



Miguel likes to watch cartoons every day after school. Sometimes he even watches them until supper. Then he rushes to get his homework done right before he goes to bed. What can Miguel do to make better choices with his time?



Crystal loves to read. She also likes to help people, too. In her class, she has seen that Sarah isn't that good at reading. How can Crystal use her time to help Sarah?



Josh really wants a new skateboard. He daydreams about it so much that he's not paying attention in school. He received a poor grade because he didn't know about a homework assignment. What should Josh do?

**Unit Verse:** "Teach us to number our days  
aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."  
Psalm 90:12

Connection Word:

living water



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to **Time** through the writings  
of the disciple **John**



John writes about the woman  
at the well: **John 4:1-39**

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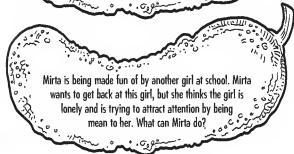
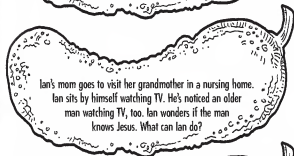
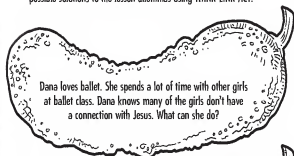
## Shepherd Tips:

- During discussions today, some children may relate to the feeling of wanting to be alone at times. Follow up by letting them know you are glad that they are a part of your group.
- If you ever plan on giving treats to your group, check with your Site Leader about any potential food allergies.
- Homemade cards are a great way to connect with your group. You may want to distribute them on holidays or birthdays!

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



**Unit Verse:** "Teach us to number our days  
aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."  
Psalm 90:12

Connection Word:

serve



### Shepherd Tips:

- When children are chosen as volunteers, make sure to let the Site Leader know which students haven't gotten picked very often.
- Try to avoid telling stories about when you were a kid. While it may be fascinating for other adults, it's not so thrilling for kids to hear!
- Get to know the parents of the kids in your group. You never know when you might be connecting them to ministry in your church.

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



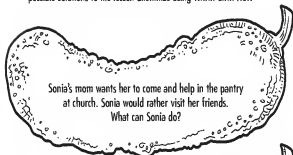
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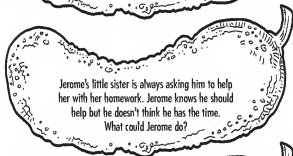


John writes about Jesus washing the disciples' feet:  
**John 13:1-20**

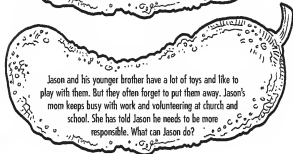
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Sonia's mom wants her to come and help in the pantry at church. Sonia would rather visit her friends.  
What can Sonia do?



Jerome's little sister is always asking him to help her with her homework. Jerome knows he should help but he doesn't think he has the time.  
What could Jerome do?



Jason and his younger brother have a lot of toys and like to play with them. But they often forget to put them away. Jason's mom keeps busy with work and volunteering at church and school. She has told Jason he needs to be more responsible. What can Jason do?

# ELEMENTARY SHEPHERD GUIDE

Connecting to **Joy** by looking at **David's Life**



## PROGRAM VERSE:

"Come near to God and  
he will come near to you."  
James 4:8

**Unit Verse:** "You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."  
Psalm 16:11

Connection Word:

joy



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to Joy by looking at David's Life



David shares his joy in the Lord: **Psalms 24, 103, 104**

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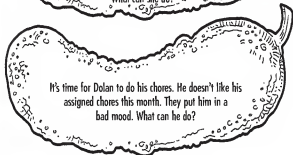
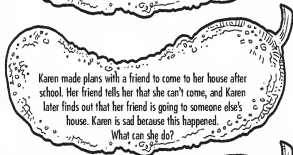
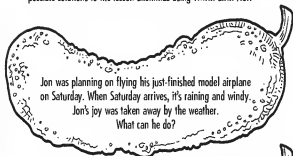
## Shepherd Tips:

- The first moments in a new site are meant for exploration! Guide your kids around the Tree House and help to build excitement about what they might learn in the coming weeks.
- This is a site full of joy! If your kids are ever having a bad day, remind them that God is always in their heart and ready to bring them joy in his relationship with them.
- Older kids can do most projects by themselves. Always be ready with lots of patience for members of your group who may need a hand from time to time.

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



**Unit Verse:** "You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."  
Psalm 16:11

Connection Word:

anoint



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to Joy by looking at David's Life



Samuel anoints David:  
1 Samuel 16:1-13

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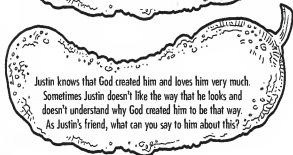
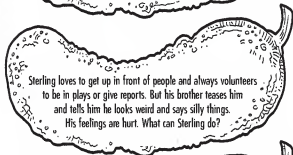
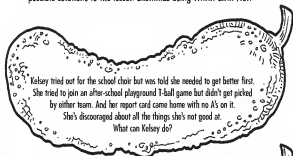
## Shepherd Tips:

- Encourage your group to pay close attention each week at the Countertop Connections.
- Be ready to pray for each child in your group by name today in the Christ Connection.
- If time permits, get the kids excited about sharing their *VeggieConnections* newspaper by reading one of the articles aloud.

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!





**Unit Verse:** "You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."  
Psalm 16:11

Connection Word:

trial



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to Joy by looking at David's Life



David fights both criticism from others and a big giant:  
**1 Samuel 17:1-50**

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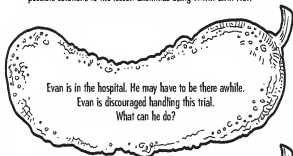
## Shepherd Tips:

- Try having the kids in your group walk sideways or backwards to the Tree House today!
- When kids seem to wander off task, simply sit down in the group and show them what good listening skills look like.
- If a child does a really terrific job, specifically tell him or her what actions made you so proud.

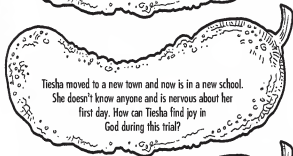
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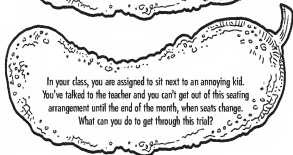
**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



Evan is in the hospital. He may have to be there awhile.  
Evan is discouraged handling this trial.  
What can he do?



Tiesha moved to a new town and now is in a new school.  
She doesn't know anyone and is nervous about her first day. How can Tiesha find joy in God during this trial?



In your class, you are assigned to sit next to an annoying kid. You've talked to the teacher and you can't get out of this seating arrangement until the end of the month, when seats change.  
What can you do to get through this trial?

**Unit Verse:** "You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."  
Psalm 16:11

Connection Word:

content



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to Joy by looking at David's Life



David waits to be king in God's time: **1 Samuel 26:1-25**

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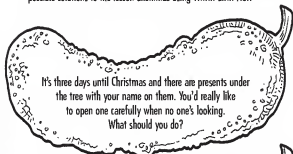
## Shepherd Tips:

- As the *VeggieConnections Music CD* is played, encourage your group to sing along. Add your crooning skills as well!
- Positively reinforce kids in your group (or in another group) who consistently engage in appropriate behavior. This can be done with a high-five, hug, or a special handshake.
- Try to "catch" kids being good each lesson.

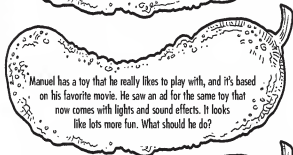
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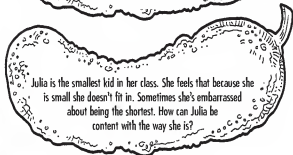
**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



It's three days until Christmas and there are presents under the tree with your name on them. You'd really like to open one carefully when no one's looking.  
What should you do?



Manuel has a toy that he really likes to play with, and it's based on his favorite movie. He saw an ad for the same toy that now comes with lights and sound effects. It looks like lots more fun. What should he do?



Julia is the smallest kid in her class. She feels that because she is small she doesn't fit in. Sometimes she's embarrassed about being the shortest. How can Julia be content with the way she is?

**Unit Verse:** "You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."  
Psalm 16:11

Connection Word:

thankfulness



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to Joy by looking at David's Life



David's prayer of thanksgiving: **2 Samuel 7:18-29;**  
**Psalm 100**

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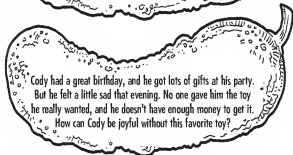
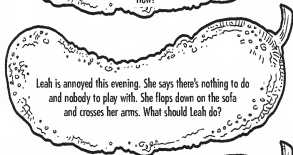
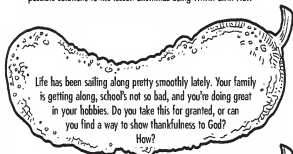
## Shepherd Tips:

- Today's focus is on thankfulness. Try to start your day today with a quick prayer, thanking God for the opportunity to work with such great kids!
- If a child demonstrates bad behavior, turn it into a teaching moment so the child can learn from the experience and make different choices next time.
- Tell any parents you see today how thankful you are to be shepherding their child.

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



**Unit Verse:** "You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."  
Psalm 16:11

Connection Word:

**compassion**



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to Joy by looking at David's Life



David shows kindness to Mephibosheth:  
**2 Samuel 9:1-13**

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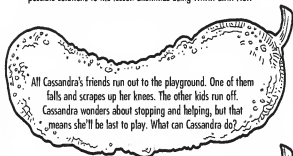
## Shepherd Tips:

- Today is a great day to share information with the kids about *Compassion International*. Include these kids in prayers today.
- When dealing with negative behavior, tell the child that you need his or her help in improving the situation. This will empower the child and help solve the problem.
- Treat yourself to something special at the end of a hard day! You are an important part of Children's Ministry!

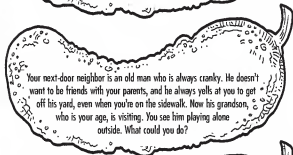
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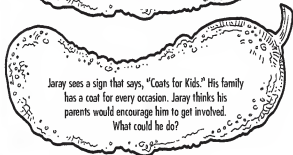
**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



All Cassandra's friends run out to the playground. One of them falls and scrapes up her knees. The other kids run off. Cassandra wonders about stopping and helping, but that means she'll be last to play. What can Cassandra do?



Your next-door neighbor is an old man who is always cranky. He doesn't want to be friends with your parents, and he always yells at you to get off his yard, even when you're on the sidewalk. Now his grandson, who is your age, is visiting. You see him playing alone outside. What could you do?



Jaray sees a sign that says, "Coats for Kids." His family has a coat for every occasion. Jaray thinks his parents would encourage him to get involved. What could he do?

**Unit Verse:** "You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."  
Psalm 16:11

Connection Word:

praise



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to Joy by looking at David's Life



David's song of praise:  
**2 Samuel 22**

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## Shepherd Tips:

- Enjoy the praise music the kids in your group make today!
- Be sure to praise a child when he or she offers to help without being asked.
- Model behavior that you expect from your group of kids by doing it yourself!

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!



Tyler made a commitment to read his Bible and pray each night before bed. But lately he's been watching TV until he's so tired he can't keep his eyes open.  
What should Tyler do?

Sondra has been going to church with a friend. But the weather is getting nice and it's hard to give up Sunday morning every week. She feels like staying at home and playing outside instead of going to church.  
What should she do?

You are in a worship service, but none of your friends are singing. You want to worship, both because you know it's the right thing to do and because you love to sing praises to the Lord. What should you do?

**Unit Verse:** "You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."  
Psalm 16:11

Connection Word:

psalm



## Today's Bible Reading:

Connecting to Joy by looking at David's Life



David's psalm of praise:  
**Psalm 145**

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## Shepherd Tips:

- During the Prayer Connection today, you will be asked to name all of the colored candles in the previous activity. Pay close attention or ask for helpers to remind you of what you missed.
- Make sure to name the child specifically when you compliment him or her.
- Sometimes kids don't always meet our high expectations. Be sure to recognize when they do give their best effort.

**THINK:** Stop and think about what God wants you to do.

**LINK:** Link God's Word and what you've learned to your choices.

**ACT:** Go and act on what God wants you to do!

